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APPLIED FORESTRY NOTES

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN
FOREST AND RANGE EXPERIMENT STATION

No. 86 Missoula, Montana July 1938

PRODUCTION OF LUMBER AND TIMBER PRODUCTS IN IDAHO AND MONTANA, 1937. 1/

The production statistics presented in this preliminary summary of returns from Idaho and Montana manufacturers were collected at the census of lumber and timber products for 1937 conducted by the Forest Service in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census. At the time of compilation all operators of record in Montana and northern Idaho had reported. Late returns from two small mills in southern Idaho may change the indicated State of Idaho total cut figures slightly. All 1937 figures contained in this statement 2/ are preliminary and subject to possible corrections in the final report to be published by the Bureau of the Census.

Since 1932, when the total cut by Idaho and Montana mills was the lowest reported in more than a quarter of a century, production in both states has increased annually. For 1937 the total lumber cut in these two states, reported by 348 mills each cutting 50 M feet or over, amounted to 1,131,901 M feet, an increase of 11.1 percent over the Idaho and Montana cut in 1936. The Montana output of 334,950 M feet by 144 mills in 1937 is the largest cut recorded for that State since 1929. In Idaho a cut of 796,951 M feet by 204 mills is larger than that of any other year since 1930.

1/ By C. N. Whitney, Special Agent, Bureau of the Census, and Associate Forester, Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station.

2/ Released for publication.

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Detailed lumber-production statistics by kinds of wood for Montana and Idaho are given in table 1, comparative cut figures for the past three years in table 2, and lumber stocks on hand at the beginning and end of the year in table 3. A summary showing production of the principal round, hewed, and split products in 1937 is given in table 4.

Table 1.--Lumber cut by species, 1937, M feet BM
(Mills cutting 50 M or over)

Kind of wood	Idaho	Montana	Combined cut	
			Volume	Percent
Idaho white pine	459,531	20,186	479,717	42.4
Ponderosa pine	213,557	154,659	368,216	32.5
Douglas fir	64,728	57,874	122,602	10.8
Western larch	29,311	84,686	113,997	10.1
Spruce	4,749	14,772	19,521	1.7
White fir	16,725	1,332	18,057	1.6
Cedar	5,087	100	5,187	0.4
Lodgepole pine	1,654	1,334	2,988	0.3
Hemlock	911	-	911	0.1
Cottonwood	698	7	705	0.1
Total	796,951	334,950	1,131,901	100.0
Lath, M pieces	60,737	17,249	77,986	
Shingles, squares	32,053	1,670	33,723	

In addition to the 348 mills cutting 50 M feet and upward, 67 mills in Idaho and 74 Montana mills reported production amounting to less than 50 M each in 1937. The aggregate additional production reported by these very small mills, not covered by cut figures included in table 1, amounted to 1,294 M for Idaho and 1,452 M for Montana.

Approximately 75 percent of the aggregate lumber cut of Idaho and Montana in 1937 by mills cutting 50 M feet or more was contributed by Idaho white pine and ponderosa pine. For each year since 1929 these two leading species have contributed from 71 to 78 percent of the total volume of all species reported. In each of the years 1927, 1928, and 1929 the combined cut of Idaho white pine and ponderosa pine amounted to approximately 64 percent of the total volume reported. In 1931 and again in 1933 Idaho white pine, alone, contributed about 51 percent of the total output for the two states. The 1937 cut of this species in Idaho, amounting to 459,531 M feet, was the largest annual cut of white pine ever reported for the state. The second highest annual cut of white pine in Idaho was that reported for the year 1936 with a total output of 441,848 M feet.

Table 2.--Comparative production for 1937, 1936, and 1935, lumber cut M feet BM
(Mills cutting less than 50 M feet excluded)

State	1937	1936	1935	Percent of increase	
				1936-1937	1935-1936
Idaho	796,951	723,804	609,212	10.1	18.8
Montana	334,950	295,233	233,633	13.4	26.4
Combined cut	1,131,901	1,019,037	842,845	11.1	20.9

In comparison with the average annual cut in Montana and Idaho for the five-year period 1924 to 1928, inclusive, which is considered a period of normal production in this region, the extent of the recovery indicated by the results of the 1937 census would be 88 percent for Montana and approximately 80 percent in Idaho. From 1924 to 1928 the five-year average annual cut amounted to 380,406 M feet in Montana and 1,001,492 M feet in Idaho. In 1932 the Montana cut was only 111,048 M and the Idaho cut 248,378 M feet.

During 1937 the total lumber stocks in Idaho and Montana increased from 527,707 M BM at the beginning of the year to 590,947 M BM on December 31. The following summary includes inventories reported by all mills cutting 50 M feet and upwards.

Table 3.--Summary of lumber stocks

State	Lumber on hand--M feet BM		Percent of increase
	January 1, 1937	December 31, 1937	
Idaho	399,728	453,219	13.4
Montana	127,979	137,728	7.6
Total	527,707	590,947	12.0

Summarized production figures for poles and piling, posts, hewed ties, and mine timbers are given in the following table. Considerable quantities of pulpwood and cordwood reported for each state are not included in this preliminary statement.

Table 4.--Production of principal round, hewed, and split products--1937

State	Poles and piling (Linear feet)	Posts (No.pieces)	Hewed ties (No.pieces)	Mine timbers (Linear feet)
Idaho	12,884,277	160,630	3,949	1,449,600
Montana	1,082,325	231,040	2,009	8,801,445
Total	13,966,602	391,670	5,958	10,251,045

Very large gains in the total output of nearly all classes of miscellaneous timber products were made in 1937 as compared with 1935, the latest preceding census at which statistics for such products were collected.